

REMARKS

Claims 2-6 are pending. By this Amendment, Claim 1 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and Claims 2, 4 and 6 are amended. Applicants respectfully submit no new material is presented herein.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants respectfully acknowledge the indication by the Examiner that Claims 2-3, although objected to for being dependent upon a rejected base claim, would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. In this regard, Applicants have rewritten dependent Claim 2 to be independent and include all of the features of rejected base Claim 1. Claims 4 and 6 have been amended to depend from allowable Claim 2, such that Claims 3-6 now depend, either directly or indirectly, from allowable Claim 2. As such, Applicants respectfully submit Claims 2-6 should be deemed allowed for reciting allowable subject matter therein.

Claim Rejections

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by either U.S. patent Number 5,623,844 to Draeger or 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Number 6,508,088 to Barbier et al. Claim 1 is also rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Number 6,751,991 to Tamukai in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,354,119 to Molzer. Claims 4-5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tamukai in view of Molzer, and further in view of U.S. Patent Number 6,389,856 to Watanuki et al. Claim 6 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Tamukai in view of Molzer, and further in view of

U.S. Patent Number 4,118,962 to Block et al. Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections are moot in view of the above-discussed amendments and respectfully request that the rejections be withdrawn.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application, withdrawal of the outstanding objection and rejections, allowance of Claims 2-6, and the prompt issuance of a Notice of Allowability are respectfully solicited.

Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place this application in better condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

In the event this paper is not considered to be timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Any fees for such an extension, together with any additional fees that may be due with respect to this paper, may be charged to counsel's Deposit Account No. 01-2300, **referencing docket number 107348-00360.**

Respectfully submitted,
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